The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS IN WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1690 · WILLIAM GREEN, President · WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 31, 1943 · GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer · VOL. 33, NO. 35

A Labor Day Message

By FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

President of the United States of America

(EDITORS.—This message from the President is for release in Labor Day editions appearing not earlier than 8 P.M., E.W.T., Saturday, Sept. 4, 1943. These instructions come from the White House and must be respected.)

Fifty-six years ago Labor Day was observed for the first time in the United States. Since then we have fought one World War to victory and now are engaged in another and even greater conflict upon the result of which depends the future of freedom-loving people the world over.

With that priceless heritage at stake we are determined that this World War, too, shall result in victory so that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness shall be the lot of man when he wills it and that he be not the downtrodden serf of brutal Axis masters. That determination is shared by all Americans: by workers, by management and by farmers.

It is altogether fitting that these groups of free Americans are working today, many laboring on round-the-clock shifts, that our fighting men on land, on sea and in the air may have the weapons with which to bring about a victory as speedily as possible.

To make time and thus save lives and suffering, our American workers, employers and farmers will need not only to maintain their production pace but to increase it. Their record to date has been magnificent and in keeping with the true American spirit of all-out effort for those fighting so valiantly and so successfully in all parts of the world.

That increased production effort will be forthcoming. It will be given gladly for love of country and for liberty, as it has been given since Pearl Harbor, to set up a record that never has been equaled. We well may be proud of that achievement for it has done much to make possible the successes of the armed forces of the United Nations. Its continuation will spell the defeat of our enemies—the preservation of our way of life.

Land Hails Record Ship Output

By EMORY S. LAND

Chairman, U. S. Maritime Commission

The American people have always felt profound respect and sincere admiration for the power, loyalty and ability of American labor to produce the goods this nation needs for peace or war. Labor Day gives one the opportunity to say so.

In the name of the U. S. Maritime Commission, I take off my hat to the men and women whose muscle and brains are delivering merchant ships in quantities that our Commander-in-Chief has termed "unbelievable." And I take off my hat to the wives and families of these workers who are backing them up under living conditions that frequently are difficult.

Much of the material that won Sicily and drove Mussolini into oblivion was delivered in the merchant ships that you built. Tanks, guns, shells, food, gasoline, jeeps, trucks and troops can't cross the ocean under their own power. It took 850 surface vessels of all types to carry the punch that won North Africa. It took 3,266 to land the blows that won Sicily. It will take all the ships we can get out of our shipyards to carry this drive through to Rome, Berlin and Tokyo.

On this Labor Day of 1943, America gratefully pays tribute for what Labor has done—and confidently calls for more!

12 Million Jobless After War Seen Unless Nation Acts Immediately

Washington, D. C.—Under the best of circumstances, the post-war unemployment problem is certain to be "critical." If adequate steps to deal with it are not taken in advance, it may be "devastating."

So declares the post-war division of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which warned that at least 12,000,000 persons may be unemployed six months after the war ends. At least 7,000,000 will be separated from payrolls immediately after the war ends, it said.

"The problem," the report added, "must be tackled now, lest the nation be led to the brink of another and even more terrible war."

A six-point program to cushion the shock was advocated. It calls for rapid reconversion of industry to peacetime production, a public works program, financial assistance to demobilized soldiers and war workers, and the voluntary withdrawal from labor markets of women, school-age youths and over-age employes.

Prediction was made that 1,500,000 workers will be turned adrift by the aircraft industry alone, and that the reduction in shipbuilding may be equally severe. The automobile industry, the report said, is expected to drop from a wartime peak of 800,000 to 200,000 and will never climb back higher than 600,000.

The bureau said welders, riveters, turret lathe operators, machinists, tool and die makers and other skilled workers will feel the impact most and will have to transfer to other kinds of work.

The outlook of the unskilled workers was pictured as being even more desperate and the board said they have a hard period of readjustment ahead.

"Rampant unemployment," the country was told, will cause all sorts of social tensions and frictions that may produce social disorders of the gravest nature.

The bureau asserted that the nation leans on a slender reed when it places complete reliance on the unemployment insurance system to tide workers over the period of readjustment. It could not possibly stand the shock, the report insisted, and that contention was upheld by Ewan Clague, director of the bureau of employment of the Social Security Board, in a radio broadcast.

"Our present system," Clague said, "just won't be able to pay all the benefits to which persons are entitled if there is as much unemployment at the end of the war as is expected."

He pointed out that the reserves are in 49 separate state funds, while unemployment will be largely concentrated in a few centers. He also recalled that millions of workers have no claim whatever on these funds, because they are not covered by the Social Security system.

Other weak links cited by Clague are that payments are too small and for too limited periods. A married man with a family, he emphasized, receives no more than a single man.

One way to meet the situation, he said, would be to consolidate all the state funds under one federal system.

Patterson Urges More Bombers, Guns

By ROBERT P. PATTERSON

Under Secretary of War

This is a significant anniversary for free labor. Since last Labor Day the tide of war has changed and the democracies find themselves on the offensive everywhere. In Italy one braggart enemy of freedom and decency has already packed his gaudy uniforms in moth balls and retired into oblivion. In Germany the Nazi oppressors look skyward, in the brightness of day and the darkness of night, while our bombers fly ceaselessly over. All across Europe, in the captive countries where working men are slaves, there are strange stirrings. The lethargy of hopelessness is gone; the day of deliverance draws nearer.

We are on the march. We have made these bombers, we have built these ships, we have sent two million men overseas and we are sending more. Now the time has come for an overpowering drive of production. We must have more bombers and more ships and more guns. We must press our military advantage. We must paralyze our enemies with our might, and appall them with our power and purpose. That is the only language they understand.

Today labor and industry are faced with their greatest challenge. This is the hour we all must have been waiting for, the hour for the supreme effort to crush tyranny.

News Briefs

THREE WAR PLANES BEAR DRESSMAKERS UNION NAME

New York City.—For the first time in this country there are three war planes flying bearing the name of a labor union. These three planes are a pursuit ship, a medium bomber and a heavy bomber, and the name they bear is "New York Dressmakers' Union ILGWU." They are named after Dressmakers' Union Local 22 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

The dressmakers' organization was granted the honor of having the three planes named after itself in recognition of its successful efforts to raise $550,000 in war bonds earlier this year in the course of the Second War Loan.

HOUSING AGENCY SEEKS HOMES FOR WAR WORKERS

Washington, D. C.—An appeal to home owners to help in the housing of war workers will be made by the government in "Share Your Home" campaigns to be conducted in some 160 key war production centers by the National Housing Agency during the fall and winter months.

These campaigns, which are to start in September and October, will center around a "War Housing Week," approximately October 3 to 9, continuing until the need in each area is met.

AFL WINS TWO ELECTIONS IN NEW ENGLAND PLANTS

Washington, D. C.—Large majorities for AFL unions as collective bargaining representatives in two New England plants were reported to AFL President William Green by John J. Murphy, AFL regional director, Boston, Mass.

The operating engineers of the George Lawley Shipyards cast 19 ballots for the AFL and 2 ballots for the CIO. At Providence, R. I., the employes of the Walsh-Kaiser Company, Inc., cast 173 ballots for the AFL and 50 for no union.

BAKERY UNION DONATES $100,000 TO WAR CHEST

New York City—Half a loaf of bread under a democratic system of government, with its promise for the future, is better than a full bowl of Japanese rice or a loaf of Nazi ersatz pumpernickel.

So says Max Kloeppel, executive officer for the First District (New York) of the Bakery and Confectionery Workers' Union, in announcing that the 18,000 members of his union have given more than $100,000 in contributions to the AFL section of the New York Labor War Chest. Additional collections are expected to swell this total to $125,000 by November.

SPEND LABOR DAY WEEKEND AT HOME, EASTMAN URGES

Washington, D. C.—The ODT has appealed to all Americans to spend the Labor Day weekend at home.

Equipment is not available this year to operate large numbers of extra trains and buses to accommodate holiday crowds, Joseph B. Eastman, ODT director, warns.

AFL AUTO UNION MEMBERS GET $22,536 BACK WAGES

Detroit, Mich. — Checks totaling $22,536.08 were recently awarded to 11 members of the AFL Auto Workers Union, representing back pay due them from the Hudson Motor Car Co.

The case dates back to 1939 when in a controversy between the AFL union and the CIO the Hudson Co. kept 11 AFL men from their jobs. The National Labor Relations Board ordered the men reinstated with back pay. The Hudson Co. took the matter to the federal courts twice, but the last decision upheld the NLRB and the AFL union. Thereupon the company paid the amount fixed by the NLRB. The court order also included provision for reinstatement of the men. Six returned to their jobs. The others, on leave of absence because of better paying jobs, were given option of returning after the war.

ELIAS REISBERG DIES; ILGWU VICE PRESIDENT

New York City.—Elias Reisberg, vice president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, died at his home, 8409 Talbot Street, Kew Gardens, L. I., on August 18. His age was 57.

Born in the Ukraine, Russia, in 1886, Mr. Reisberg came to the United States in 1906. He joined the ILGWU in 1909 and took an active part in the garment workers campaign of that year to abolish the sweating system in the needle trades. He served as ILGWU vice president since 1922. From July, 1935, until his death he served as first director of the Cotton Garment Department of the ILGWU.

Meany Asks International Program To Maintain Peace After Victory

Also Demands Post-War Jobs Plan In "Labor For Victory" Radio Address

New York City.—American labor insists that this war, after victory, must "stay won," George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Labor, told a nationwide radio audience.

Organized labor calls for international cooperation when peace comes as the only way to "make sure that this war will not be followed by another war 25 years from now," Mr. Meany said.

"An enduring peace cannot be achieved and maintained except through international cooperation," he declared. "We approve such cooperation and we call upon our government to join with other nations of goodwill so that, if any future Hitler should raise his head after peace comes, there will be machinery at hand to make it impossible for him to plunge the world into war."

Mr. Meany, who spoke on the AFL's "Labor For Victory" program, said the laboring people have a right to speak up on this subject because the brunt of the fighting in this war, as in all previous wars, is being borne by "working people from the cities and working people from the farms." He pointed out that 2,000,000 American trade union members are already in uniform.

The first item on the AFL's domestic economic program for postwar America is "a fair deal for the soldiers and sailors upon their return from the fighting fronts," Mr. Meany said.

"The main thing that every veteran will want and needs is a job—a real job which will enable him to earn a living and to maintain the dignity of a useful member of society," he declared. "We of the American Federation of Labor pledge our efforts to the end that our boys, when they come back from the fighting fronts all over the world, will not seek jobs in vain."

Mr. Meany added, however, that the American Federation of Labor's postwar program calls for jobs not only for the demobilized fighting men but also for the millions of men and women who are now working in war plants and will require new jobs when peace comes.

"We of the American Federation of Labor refuse to accept the theory that a depression is inevitable after the war," he said. "We do not have to have a depression and, as a matter of fact, we MUST NOT have a depression. The American people cannot be expected to accept the misery of unemployment that was experienced in the years following 1929."

He proposed that in each industry which is now producing for war labor representatives and employer representatives should start sitting down together to try to find ways and means of increasing peacetime production and achieving full employment.

Mr. Meany said private industry must supply the bulk of the jobs after the war ends, but he emphasized that government will also have an important part to play.

"The government, in the first place, has the responsibility of encouraging industrial expansion," he said. "The American Federation of Labor holds that the government should not only permit but stimulate opportunities to make a reasonable and fair profit. An enterprise which makes a profit is willing to expand. Expansion spells more jobs, and that is what labor will want."

N. Y. Federation Elects T. A. Murray, Reaffirms Labor's No-Strike Pledge

Buffalo, N. Y.—The convention of the State Federation of Labor adopted resolutions reaffirming labor's no-strike pledge for the duration of the war, condemning the Connally-Smith Anti-Strike Law, expressing support of President Roosevelt and calling upon members of organized labor to mobilize for the defeat of members of Congress who voted for restrictive labor legislation.

The convention also called for the election of a win-the-war Congress.

Other resolutions adopted by the convention called for wage increases of "at least 15 per cent" for all employes of the City of New York; urged the creation by the State administration of a committee to plan for a program of public works for post-war employment; reaffirmed opposition to any legislation designed to bring back prohibition; recommended that members of the armed services affiliated with labor unions join the American Legion; condemned anti-Semitism and all racial discrimination; called upon labor unions to lift any existing bars against Negroes, and endorsed the Labor War Chest of New York.

The convention heard an address by Joseph Keenan, assistant director of the War Production Board, who stressed the critical manpower question confronting the nation and declared that labor must be ready to respond to new readjustments in industry to put into effect soon and which will require additional sacrifices.

Commander E. J. Spalding, Seabee recruiting chief, expressed the thanks of the Navy to organized labor for its cooperation in the recruiting of 250,000 members of the building trades and longshoremen.

The convention elected Thomas A. Murray, head of the New York Building and Construction Trades Council, president of the New York Federation of Labor to succeed the late Thomas J. Lyons. E. W. Edwards was re-elected secretary-treasurer. All the 13 vice presidents were also re-elected.

Forrestal Calls For All-Out Production

By JAMES V. FORRESTAL

Under Secretary of the Navy

On this Labor Day, the second since our entry into the war, the might of American war production is making itself felt on every front in this global war. That might exemplifies the patriotism and loyalty of American working men and women. It expresses their hatred for the tyranny and oppression of the Axis governments.

On Labor Day a year ago, American workers adopted the slogan, "Free Labor Will Win." Operating as a team, American fighting men and workers translated that slogan into victories in North Africa, Sicily and in the South Pacific. Those victories were important to the Allied cause. They provided bases for an offensive against both ends of the Axis. Now, we must push forward to the destruction of Hitler's armies and the extermination of Japanese forces in the Pacific. The task will be long and hard.

There can be no breathing spell. We dare not relax. We must mobilize all our energy and all our strength for these gigantic campaigns.

We must darken the skies over the fortress of Europe with bigger bombers and better fighters. We must enlarge the bridge of ships to our battle outposts. We must make certain that our fighting men will have an overwhelming superiority of firepower, both on land and at sea. In short, we must engulf the enemy's military machine in a flood of steel and fire. The outcome of the war will depend, in a large measure, on the loyal efforts of the men and women on the production line. You must not falter—you cannot fail.

As the United Nations embark on the greatest military campaign of history, American fighting men and those of our Allies depend upon American Labor to keep the weapons coming.

Remember the message cabled from Sicily by a war correspondent:

"We on the scene know for sure that you can substitute machines for lives and that, if we can plague and smother the enemy with an unbearable weight of machinery . . . hundreds of thousands of our young men, whose expectancy was small, can some day walk again through their own front doors."

That is American Labor's challenge.

Labor Producing For Attack—Davis

By ELMER DAVIS

Director, Office of War Information

America's fighting and working men and women have done magnificent jobs and the enemy is on the run. But unless the unexpected occurs, the bloodiest, deadliest part of the job is still ahead. That is the knockout punch—or more likely, a series of knockout punches.

The productiveness of our people and our machines made possible the triumphs of Tunisia, Sicily and the air and sea victories over Europe and the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Now, the knockout punches ahead are calling for more production, harder work, more dangerous fighting.

Fittingly, labor is not resting on this Labor Day. It is devoting its energies, know-how, and initiative, to the production of war materials in such volume that our fighting men will be invincible in the offensives ahead.

The workers of this country are producing for attack.

The AFL Plan To Banish Fear of Want

Thirteenth Article Stresses The Importance Of Making Provision For Medical Care In Social Insurance System

Insurance for medical care works like all other kinds of insurance. For small regular payments to the insurance fund people can buy much larger cash benefits in case they meet the misfortune against which they are insured. The amount they pay and the benefits they get are calculated according to the number of people who carry insurance and the likelihood that members will need to draw benefits. Then the person who gets sick can count upon his insurance to pay the doctor or nurse, or for any other necessary treatment which the insurance covers. The insured family which keeps well has bought freedom from worry about the cost of possible sickness.

What Medical Insurance Could Do

Insurance to pay for medical care should give us better health and should give many doctors a better living and a chance to work at their profession without having to spend so much of their time in collecting bills. Insured family members could go to the doctor as soon as anyone in the family began to feel sick because their insurance would pay for it; and the doctors would have many more patients than they have today. We have no desire to interfere in the scientific matters of the medical profession in which doctors only are competent, but we are concerned to make medical care available to those who need it.

When we set up medical insurance in our social security system a worker who is insured can go or can take his family to any doctor who is acceptable to the medical insurance system. If you don't know a doctor, one will be provided and if you have confidence in him you can ask him the next time and the next until he comes to know your family and the children come to know him and to feel at home with him. If you already have a family physician who cooperates with the medical insurance, so much the better. Your membership will entitle you to treatment at the doctor's office, or, if some one is too sick to go to the office, you can ask the doctor to make a house call.

If one of the youngsters loses his appetite, the wife can take him around to the doctor to see what's the matter. If your job requires a physical examination or a checkup regularly, you can get it through your medical insurance instead of going to the company doctor. If the wife needs regular treatment for arthritis she can have that, too. If the doctor says you need to go to a specialist your insurance would take care of that; also if the doctor says you need to go to the hospital to have an operation or that your wife needs a nurse when she has a high fever. If one of the children must have a brace for his leg your medical insurance should pay for that, too. If some one in the family should be sick it would be good to know that you need only continue to make your regular insurance payments in order to give him all the medical care he requires.

Of course it is harder to show that a person is sick and entitled to medical benefits than to prove that some one is 65 years old and ready for old age benefits. Some families might go to the doctor unnecessarily; and some people would rather lie in bed than go to work. All that we'll have to leave to the doctors. Some of them are thinking about these things and are trying to work out the details of insured medical care from the professional side while we are all working on the insurance end.

Preventing Sickness

Medical insurance can help to prevent a great deal of sickness. When people feel free to go to the doctor, without fear of the cost, they can avoid many a severe spell of illness. Everybody used to be afraid of smallpox; but now it's not half so dangerous as pneumonia or tuberculosis. When nearly everyone has medical care we can begin to conquer the problems of cancer, venereal disease, heart disease and other so-called diseases of civilization, instead of letting them slowly eat away people's lives. We can safeguard the health of mothers, babies and young children as never before. We can take the offensive and prevent sickness instead of fighting at the last ditch in a hand to hand struggle against disability and death.

When we get national medical insurance that takes in farm workers and self-employed people, good doctors can stay and practice in small towns and out-of-the-way places where sick people need attention just as they do in the big cities. The country doctor can then have a chance at a good living, with time off every so often to go to the large city clinic and brush up on the latest discoveries in medicine. As it is today the doctors crowd into the cities in the hope of making a living; and most of them have to starve along for a number of years before they've built up a practice. We can't blame them, either, for avoiding the country when we realize that the regular fee for attending a patient 10 or 20 miles out of town may be less than the taxi fare to the place. But the result is that some entire counties have no doctors at all because the families are poor and widely scattered.

Medical insurance could also help to build up hospitals in communities which now cannot afford to have one; and better health in rural areas is to the advantage of city people as well as farmers. Disease germs don't stay put, but travel quickly and mysteriously from one place to another. The only way to achieve national health is to make every part of this nation healthy.

Part of a National Insurance System

Of course, adding insurance for medical care will increase the cost of our social insurance, but the cost will be small when compared with the advantages which the added insurance will give us. Right now American families are spending about 4 or 5 percent of their income for medical care alone, and most of us can't begin to buy the medical attention we ought to have. If we add insurance for medical care to our national social security system we can have the whole thing—old age and survivors' insurance, temporary and permanent disability insurance, unemployment insurance and medical and hospital insurance—for 6 percent of wages paid by the employes and 6 percent of the pay roll paid by the employer. We can do it as inexpensively as that, on a national basis, because we already have in old age and survivors' insurance all the records and the machinery for collecting contributions and for paying benefits. For example, the contributions to all kinds of social insurance could be sent in together, thereby saving time and expense. The local social security office could furnish us the necessary proof of membership in good standing in the medical insurance fund, entitling us to service whenever necessary.

We can get all this insurance for the price because we can estimate the insurance risks. From our national records of sickness we can gauge pretty accurately how many people are going to be sick and what kind of care they will need. If we estimate the amount of sickness which the people who carry medical insurance are likely to have, and what care they must have, we can figure out just about what it will cost. We can add something for a reserve against unforeseen contingencies, strike a yearly average and divide the total cost among the beneficiaries. Then in a healthy year we'll add to our reserves, have something to draw upon in time of epidemics.

Working Out Plans With the Doctors

Raising the money to pay for medical care is easier than providing the first class medical care itself. For that part of the job we must depend upon the doctors who have their professional traditions and upon the managements of our hospitals. Some doctors think that this country is ready to go ahead with medical insurance and some are afraid of it.

Thirty years ago when we got our first workmen's compensation laws for industrial accidents many doctors were afraid of the movement; and the hesitation of people who were high in the profession sometimes left the workmen's compensation practice to those with less skill and lower ethical standards. In some states workmen's compensation is still suffering from the bad first start; and the results to injured workmen at times have been disastrous. We don't want the same thing to happen with medical insurance.

Organized labor believes that it is possible to work out practical plans for cooperation between the medical profession and health insurance. Then we could start with the doctors of the country behind it because they would feel that their own professional rights and skills were represented and safeguarded. Of course the nation cannot put a comprehensive national medical care program into actual operation during the war while so many doctors are with the armed forces, but we can begin to lay plans and build up the insurance end. Then when the doctors return from military service the health insurance program should offer many of them an opportunity to practice and should help them to fit into the places which need them most.

Our Nation's Strength

A hundred years ago, after we had achieved universal manhood suffrage, the American labor movement struggled to secure universal public education. That education has been a source of our national strength. Now that we have begun to build social security we can further strengthen our nation by a program of national health through medical care insurance.

A. F. OF L. COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY.
MATTHEW WOLL, *Chairman*,
GEORGE MEANY,
G. M. BUGNIAZET,
JOHN P. FREY.